

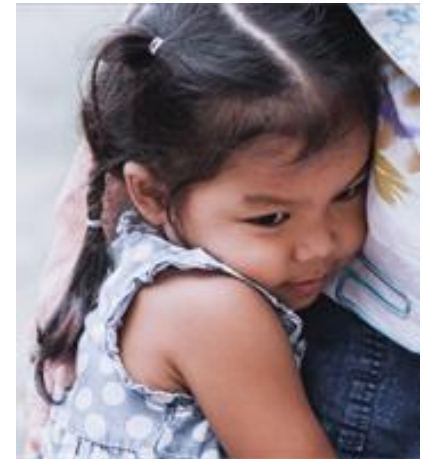


NC DEPARTMENT OF  
**HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES**  
Division of Child Development  
and Early Education

# NC WAGE\$ & AWARD\$ Plus

Ariel Ford, Director  
Division of Child Development and Early Education

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# Our Vision

All North Carolina children will get a healthy start and develop to their full potential in safe and nurturing families, schools and communities.

# Our Guiding Principles

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Children and families are at the center of our work.



Brain and developmental science are fundamental.



Alleviate inequity to ensure that all of North Carolina's children can reach their fullest potential.



Build upon existing strengths and partnerships in early childhood systems.



Set bold priorities and achievable goals for North Carolina's young children.



Track progress toward all goals, ensuring transparency, accountability, and good stewardship of resources.

# Raise North Carolina: Raise North Carolina Educators

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- **At the center of NC's early care and learning network are thousands of providers and teachers with a deep commitment to the healthy development of children and to the families and communities they serve.**
- North Carolina's future relies upon highly qualified early care and learning professionals to provide education and care for over 220,000 children per year.
- **They want to stay in the profession**, but their salaries and benefits often force them to look elsewhere. Early learning teachers, many of whom are parents themselves, aren't compensated like other teachers.
- They make on average \$12 per hour, and half are not offered health insurance. One-third work full time but have been paid so little they have needed some form of public assistance in the last three years.
- Emergency COVID-19 federal funding has helped struggling teachers keep the doors open, but without increased, sustained long-term investment, many fear the approaching end of this short-term funding may also mean the end of their early education programs.

## Child Care WAGE\$ Program

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**“WAGE\$ motivates my staff to keep going, making my job more rewarding as they meet their goals. ... WAGE\$ has added a monetary reward to keep the staff pushing for higher education and allows the staff to gain more knowledge to apply in the center. It definitely helps with job retention as well!”**

**–WAGE\$ director**



# Child Care WAGE\$ Program

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- Program provides education-based salary supplements to low-paid teacher, directors and family child care providers working with children birth to five.
- WAGE\$ participants must work at least six months in the same child care program to be eligible for a supplement. These financial awards make it more possible for teachers to afford to work in an undercompensated field. As a result, children benefit in the years when these stable and engaging relationships are most critical.
- In FY 2022, 4018 participants received stipends in 61 counties.
- The average six-month supplement (\$1,203) increases the typical hourly rate by \$ 1.16.
- 98% of the WAGE\$ participant survey respondents said WAGE\$ helps ease financial stress and 96% said WAGE\$ helps them feel more satisfied with their jobs

## Infant Toddler Educator AWARD\$ Plus

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**“Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$® has given me reason to stay at my current program when their rate of pay was not meeting my needs. It’s given me more financial security, decreased stress from financial strain and helped me to be a more present teacher for my children in the classroom.” – AWARD\$ participant**

# Infant Toddler Educator AWARD\$ Plus

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- **Designed to increase the education, retention and compensation of teachers and family child care educators working with our youngest children.**
- **Infant-toddler teaching staff earn \$11.00/hr. on average compared to \$12.45/hr. for those who teach children who are three to five years old**
- **The average six-month supplement (\$1,288) increases the typical hourly rate by \$ 1.24**
- **In FY 2022, over \$3 million in salary supplements was awarded to 1,337 infant-toddler teachers and FCC providers across NC**



# NC Birth to Three Quality Initiative

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- **In person and virtual individualized coaching, mentoring, and consultation for teachers, administrators and FCCH that serve children birth – age three. Available in all 100 counties.**
- **Practice-based Coaching**
- **Peer-to-peer Mentorship Opportunities**
- **Professional development planning and trainings**



# Questions?

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